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IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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For immediate release

1. Storm water permits now required for one-acre land clearing

STORM WATER PERMITS NOW REQUIRED FOR ONE-ACRE LAND CLEARING

DES MOINES – Starting March 10, 2003, anyone who disturbs or clears one acre or more of land must have a storm water permit from the DNR.

“This applies to anyone involved in construction activities, including municipalities, counties, individuals and farmers,” said Joe Griffin, program coordinator with the DNR.

The permit is required when one acre or more is disturbed on any project that bares the ground by removing vegetation, concrete or other stabilizing materials. A bare surface includes soil stockpiles.

Griffin said that there is an agricultural exemption for activities that further cropping. That would include installing drainage tile or terraces in a crop field, or grubbing trees for a row crop.

Permits are relatively simple to obtain. First a pollution prevention plan must be written for the site that is being cleared. The plan should outline how erosion will be minimized during the construction project. Practices such as silt fences, retention basins, temporary seeding or mulch can be used.

“One of the most effective ways to prevent erosion is to disturb the minimum amount of surface area at any one time,” said Griffin.

The pollution prevention plan must be followed, but it does not need to be submitted to the DNR. After writing the plan, a two-page application form needs to be completed. Information on how to file a complete notice of intent and the general storm water permit No. 2 are available on the DNR’s website at

<http://www.state.ia.us/epd/wastewtr/wwapps/npdes.htm#storm>.

Permit applicants must provide proof of public notification and the one-year fee of \$150 with their application form.

Griffin said that anyone disturbing five acres or more has been required to have a storm water permit since 1992, but the one-acre requirement was required after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency changed their rules in 1999.

For more information, contact Joe Griffin at 515-281-7017.